NEWS

Putin compares woke culture to Bolshevik propaganda, calls gender ideology ‘crime against humanity’

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Vladimir Putin Shutterstock

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SOTCHI, Russia (LifeSiteNews) — Russian President Valdimir Putin has condemned the promotion of woke culture in the West, including critical race theory and gender ideology, and has described the latter as a "crime against humanity."

Putin made the comment last Thursday while addressing dignitaries and reporters at the Valdai discussion club in Sotchi, an annual forum on Russian affairs. The Russian president severely criticized the West for having allowed woke culture to introduce "reversed discrimination" through critical race theory and the destruction of traditional family values through gender ideology, both of which he compared to propaganda tools used by communist governments during Russia's Soviet era. He then described exposing innocent children to non-traditional sexual values as "monstrous" and a "crime against humanity."

The Russian leader began by criticizing critical race theory. He alluded to movements like Black Lives Matter and to cancel culture in the U.S, arguing that, far from fighting racism, these types of movements are creating a sort of 'reversed discrimination.'

"The fight for equality and against discrimination has turned into aggressive dogmatism bordering on absurdity," Putin said.

Putin described the censorship now enforced in certain places against classic works of art or literature now considered "backwards" or out of touch with current concerns over race or gender.

"The works of the great authors of the past – such as Shakespeare – are no longer taught at schools or universities because their ideas are believed to be backward," the president alleged.

"… The classics are declared backward and ignorant of the importance of gender or race."

Putin also criticized the so-called diversity quotas in place within the entertainment industry which select characters based on their race or gender.

"In Hollywood, memos are distributed about proper storytelling and how many characters of what color or gender should be in a movie," he said and described these tactics as worse than the propaganda put in place by the agitprop department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

The Russian president argued that the original fight against racism, which he described as “necessary” and “noble”, has now been flipped on its head by the culture warriors advocating critical race theory and cancel culture.

“Countering acts of racism is a necessary and noble cause, but the new ‘cancel culture’ has turned it into a ‘reverse discrimination’ that is, reverse racism,” he said.

Putin pointed out that the current overemphasis on race is precisely what the civil rights fighters of the 1960s were trying to avoid, as their dream was to erase differences and divisions. He quoted Martin Luther King’s famous speech “I have a dream.”

“I specifically asked my colleagues to find the following quote from Martin Luther King: ‘I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by their character,’” he said.

Later in his speech, Putin tackled gender ideology and opined that in many western countries, “the debate over women’s rights has turned into a perfect phantasmagoria.”

“Zealots of these new approaches even go so far as to abolish these concepts [of men and women] altogether,” he said.

“Anyone who dares to mention that men and women actually exist, which is a biological fact, risks being ostracized,” he added.

The Russian leader then addressed the emergence of a “newspeak” created by this gender ideology and described as “insane” the idea of replacing words such as “mother” and “father” with “parent number one” and “parent number two” or “breastmilk” with “human milk” in an effort to avoid offending people “who are unsure about their own gender.”

Putin used strong words to condemn the attempt by some countries and government to impose this ideology even on young children. Teaching them that there are no biological sexes or allowing them to change their gender he described as “monstrous.”

He argued that, in many cases, the choice is imposed on the child by the teacher while the parents are “shut out of the process.”

“They do not even bother to consult with child psychologists – is a child at this age capable of making a decision of this kind?” Putin asked.

“Calling a spade, a spade, this verges on a crime against humanity, and it is being done in the name and under the banner of progress.”

Commenting on the various agendas pushed by the promoters of woke culture and so-called culture warriors, Putin pointed out that the tactics used, and the ideas put forward, are not new; he tied them to historical Marxist propaganda.

“It may come as a surprise to some people, but Russia has been there already,” he said.

“After the 1917 revolution, the Bolsheviks, relying on the dogmas of Marx and Engels, also said that they would change existing ways and customs, and not just political and economic ones, but the very notion of human morality and the foundations of a healthy society,” he explained.

According to Putin, the same conservative values that were attacked by the communists in Russia at the time are now the ones being attacked by the woke mobs in the West.

“The destruction of age-old values, religion, and relations between people, up to and including the total rejection of family (we had that too), encouragement to inform on loved ones, all this was proclaimed ‘progress’ and was widely supported around the world back then, same as today,” he said.

The creation of a whole new language and the introduction of new concepts such as the “parent number one” and “parent number two” is also not new, he said. The Russian president observed that the same technique was used by the Soviet cultural enforcers.

“I repeat, this is nothing new. In the 1920s, the so-called Soviet *Kulturtraegers* also invented some newspeak, believing that they were creating a new consciousness and changing values that way,” he said.

President Putin has a long history of defending traditional family values.

In 2013, as Prime Minister, he signed a bill to outlaw the distribution of information on “non-traditional sexual concepts” to children throughout the Russian Federation. Putin defended the bill on CBS two years later in 2015, arguing: “I believe we should leave the kids in peace.” In 2016, as President, Putin appointed a pro-life activist, mother of six and wife of a Russian Orthodox priest, as the head of the Russian Commission for the Protection of the Family and Children’s Rights. And in 2019, during a discussion around family values which took place during a meeting on constitutional reform, Putin stated: “As for ‘parent #1’ and ‘parent #2’, I have already publicly said it and I will repeat it once more: as long as I am president, we will not have parents #1 and #2, we will have ‘papa’ and ‘mamma.’”